

Statements of Support for Senator Heitkamp's Tribal Food and Housing Security Act

"Housing, access to affordable and nutritious food, and funding for rural development infrastructure are critical issues for the MHA Nation and our rural community. Indian tribes are often the economic engine for rural areas. Senator Heitkamp's bill would help to ensure that Indian tribes are included in the next Farm Bill and we appreciate her recognition of our role in rural economies."

- **Mark Fox, Chairman, Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation**

"Of the many challenges facing Indian Country today, health and economic development are two of the most pressing. The Farm Bill is an opportunity to make progress for Native American communities like Standing Rock, and Senator Heitkamp's efforts to improve nutrition, housing, and economic development programs are a great step forward. We will continue to work with Senator Heitkamp to make sure Native communities are prioritized in the final bill."

- **Mike Faith, Chairman, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe**

"Access to healthy, affordable food is a challenge for Spirit Lake and other tribes, especially in difficult times when budgets are strained. Senator Heitkamp's bill would provide long-term assurance for the Spirit Lake Nation's ability to provide nutrition assistance to low-income households and children who are at risk of going hungry. We greatly appreciate Senator Heitkamp's efforts to help make sure that the needs Native communities are represented in the next Farm Bill."

- **Mary Greene Trottier, Director of Spirit Lake Nation's Food Distribution Program**

"The 502 direct loan is a great mortgage product for our Native families. The problem is that the Rural Development staff is spread too thin to get a lot of these deals done on trust land. What Senator Heitkamp is proposing would set up a process for Native community development financial institutions to step in as intermediary lenders. It's a perfect fit - Native CDFIs have a pipeline of qualified borrowers and Rural Development has the mortgage capital. We appreciate Heidi's leadership in bringing these pieces together."

- **James "JC" Crawford, Executive Director of the Sisseton Wahpeton Housing Authority**

"The next Farm Bill will determine policies affecting rural communities for years to come. We must use this opportunity to help support Native American communities, which for too long have been pushed to the margins in Farm Bill discussions. Senator Heitkamp's outreach and continued work with the Native Farm Bill Coalition and her work on behalf of improving the Farm Bill and the way it addresses agricultural policies, food production, natural resource conservation, rural development, and affordable housing for Indian Country will have long-standing positive impacts."

- **Janie Simms Hipp (Chickasaw), Director of the Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative at University of Arkansas School of Law, a research partner in the Native Farm Bill Coalition**

“The Tribal Food and Housing Security Act will bring much needed stability to tribal food and housing programs. Not only will this important piece of legislation end the cumbersome matching requirement for the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, it will bring much more tribal access to USDA Rural Development through housing and technical assistance. NCAI is pleased to see these long overdue fixes included in this bill. NCAI encourages both House and Senate Agriculture Committees to include Senator Heitkamp’ s legislation in the final Farm Bill.”

- **Jacqueline Pata, Executive Director, National Congress of American Indians**